

RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF
CONRAD RAY BURNS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, Elaine and I were saddened by the passing of Conrad Burns last month. Senator Burns was a big personality from a big State. He will certainly be missed by those who had the opportunity to know him.

Our thoughts were with Phyllis and the Burns family then, and they remain with Phyllis and the Burns family today.

The Senate remembers this former colleague.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 457, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 457) relative to the death of Conrad Ray Burns, former United States Senator for the State of Montana.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 457) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF
ROBERT F. BENNETT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 458, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 458) relative to the death of Robert F. Bennett, former Senator of the State of Utah.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 458) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MAY 10,
2016

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2:15 p.m., Tuesday, May 10; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate then resume consideration of H.R. 2028; further, that the filing deadline for first-degree amendments under rule XXII to the Alexander substitute amendment No. 3801 be at 2:30 p.m. tomorrow; finally, that the Senate adjourn today under the provisions of S. Res. 457 and S. Res. 458.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Tennessee.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I would like to make brief comments concerning the status of the Energy and Water appropriations bill, following the actions of the majority leader. I said most of what I had to say earlier.

Here is my view of it. Tonight, and for the third time, the Senate voted not to end debate on the Energy and Water appropriations bill, even though we have virtually finished all of our work on it. We have one difference of opinion, and it is a big one. It is provocative. It is the Cotton amendment that would prohibit U.S. tax dollars being used next year to purchase heavy water from Iran.

The majority leader has filed cloture on the Cotton amendment, which means that after tomorrow—the intervening day—we will have a vote on the Cotton amendment on Wednesday. We will dispense with it the way we usually dispense with issues about which we have large differences of opinion: We vote on them. Sometimes we can work them out, sometimes we can withdraw them, and sometimes we can't. So we are going to vote on it. Senator COTTON has said that if he should not win the amendment, he will withdraw it. That will dispose of the Cotton amendment, and then we can move on and finish the Energy and Water appropriations bill.

I said earlier today, and I will reiterate, that while I have defended Senator COTTON's right to offer his amendment—it is germane and it is relevant—I will vote no on his amendment for two reasons. One reason is I believe it raises the possibility that if the United States is not allowed to buy heavy water from Iran, then it puts it on the international market and it could be purchased by other countries, such as North Korea, for use in making nuclear weapons.

This is not a vote for or against the Iran nuclear agreement. I am opposed to that agreement. This is a question about what to do about the heavy water that Iran has, which it has to get rid of, which can be used either for peaceful purposes, which we use it for in the United States when we have it—we use it for the neutron microscope at the Oak Ridge Laboratory, we use it for fiber optics, we use it for MRI imaging, we use it in a variety of ways—or it can be used to make plutonium and nuclear weapons. Now is not the time to be increasing the possibility that heavy water from Iran could be put on the international market and sold to a country such as North Korea, which might use it to make nuclear weapons. That is No. 1.

No. 2, while the amendment is relevant and germane, this is an amendment that ought to be considered first in the Foreign Relations Committee or the Armed Services Committee. I get a lot of lectures sometimes in our Republican lunches about appropriators making decisions that ought to be in the authorizing committee. Well, this is one of them. If there were an issue that raises more such complex national security issues, it would be hard to think of one. Might this heavy water be used by a country to make nuclear weapons or, on the other hand, if we purchase it, does it create a market or an incentive for Iran to produce more heavy water? What happens to India, which produces heavy water? What happens to Argentina? What happens to the need of the United States for heavy water, since we don't produce it at all, yet we need it? Iran produces it. We don't want them to have it. We don't produce it. We need it. We don't want North Korea to have it. These are complex national security issues that ought not to be decided on an amendment to this bill.

I will be voting no on the Cotton amendment because of the fear that it might create the possibility that putting it on the international market would put this distilled water, which could be used peacefully, in the hands of those who might make a bomb with it, and because I think an appropriate way to handle it is to first allow the Foreign Relations Committee or the Armed Services Committee to deal with it.

This is a sincere amendment. I have defended the right of the Senator from Arkansas to offer his amendment. My friends on the other side don't like the amendment. They see it as provocative. They see it as a poison pill. That is a difference we will just have to work out over time.

This is the U.S. Senate. The right way to work out differences we can't otherwise work out is simply to vote. The majority leader has made sure we will have a vote on the Cotton amendment by Wednesday.

My hope is that as important as this Energy and Water appropriations bill is, that Senator FEINSTEIN and I could work with the Democratic leader and